

**To:** Smith, Paula[Smith.Paula@epa.gov]  
**From:** Russo, Rebecca  
**Sent:** Thur 8/13/2015 4:26:04 PM  
**Subject:** FW: News Release - Update on Local Response to Gold King Mine - Irrigation Ditches to be Flushed

Paula,

Can you please make sure I'm included on messages from Melissa. I'm not on her distribution list. I didn't know anything about last night's data release until Tim told me that he was preparing something for the website. I know Melissa asked for me to coordinate through you, but I really need to know what's going on so I'm not asking stupid questions constantly. Can you just ask her to cc me please? I will continue to go through you unless I really need something from her.

I would appreciate it.

Rebecca

Rebecca A. Russo

Region 8 Congressional and Intergovernmental Liaison

Office: 303-312-6757

Cell: 303-204-1930

**From:** McClain-Vanderpool, Lisa  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 13, 2015 10:16 AM  
**To:** Russo, Rebecca  
**Subject:** RE: News Release - Update on Local Response to Gold King Mine - Irrigation Ditches to be Flushed

## Deliberative Process/Ex. 5

Lisa McClain-Vanderpool

Public Affairs Specialist/Media Officer

Office of Communications and Public Involvement  
US Environmental Protection Agency, Region 8  
1595 Wynkoop Street  
Denver, Colorado 80202  
Office 303.312.6077  
Cell 303.501.4027

**From:** Russo, Rebecca  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 13, 2015 10:14 AM  
**To:** Card, Joan; Thomi, Wendy; McClain-Vanderpool, Lisa; Mylott, Richard; Hestmark, Martin; Poulet, Chris; Strausbaugh, Dan  
**Cc:** Smith, Paula  
**Subject:** RE: News Release - Update on Local Response to Gold King Mine - Irrigation Ditches to be Flushed

## Deliberative Process/Ex. 5

Rebecca A. Russo  
Region 8 Congressional and Intergovernmental Liaison  
Office: 303-312-6757  
Cell: 303-204-1930

**From:** Card, Joan  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 13, 2015 8:56 AM  
**To:** Thomi, Wendy; McClain-Vanderpool, Lisa; Mylott, Richard; Hestmark, Martin; Poulet, Chris; Strausbaugh, Dan  
**Cc:** Russo, Rebecca; Smith, Paula  
**Subject:** RE: News Release - Update on Local Response to Gold King Mine - Irrigation Ditches to be Flushed

Deliberative Process/Ex. 5

**From:** Thomi, Wendy  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 13, 2015 8:53 AM  
**To:** McClain-Vanderpool, Lisa; Mylott, Richard; Hestmark, Martin; Card, Joan; Poulet, Chris; Strausbaugh, Dan  
**Subject:** FW: News Release - Update on Local Response to Gold King Mine - Irrigation Ditches to be Flushed

FYI

**From:** Sarah Jacobson [mailto:[Sarah.Jacobson@co.laplata.co.us](mailto:Sarah.Jacobson@co.laplata.co.us)]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 12, 2015 7:20 PM  
**To:** Liane Jollon; Myers, Craig; Butch Knowlton; [msouder@southernute-nsn.gov](mailto:msouder@southernute-nsn.gov); [kgurule@southernute-nsn.gov](mailto:kgurule@southernute-nsn.gov); [terry.hoecker@durangogov.org](mailto:terry.hoecker@durangogov.org); [drew.petersen@state.co.us](mailto:drew.petersen@state.co.us); [trevor.denney@state.co.us](mailto:trevor.denney@state.co.us); Thomas McNamara; [Matt.Thorpe@state.co.us](mailto:Matt.Thorpe@state.co.us); [casey.kay@state.co.us](mailto:casey.kay@state.co.us); [greg.naugle@state.co.us](mailto:greg.naugle@state.co.us); [heather.drissel@state.co.us](mailto:heather.drissel@state.co.us); [patrick.j.pfaltzgraff@state.co.us](mailto:patrick.j.pfaltzgraff@state.co.us); [Ron.LeBlanc@durangogov.org](mailto:Ron.LeBlanc@durangogov.org); [cathy.metz@durangogov.org](mailto:cathy.metz@durangogov.org); [christinarinderle@durangogov.org](mailto:christinarinderle@durangogov.org); [dbrookie@cityofdurango.gov](mailto:dbrookie@cityofdurango.gov); [marybeth.miles@durangogov.org](mailto:marybeth.miles@durangogov.org); [mitchell.carter@durangogov.org](mailto:mitchell.carter@durangogov.org); [wayne.walsh@durangogov.org](mailto:wayne.walsh@durangogov.org); [victor.locke@durangogov.org](mailto:victor.locke@durangogov.org); [matt.holden@durangogov.org](mailto:matt.holden@durangogov.org); [steve.salka@durangogov.org](mailto:steve.salka@durangogov.org); [tpage@firenet.org](mailto:tpage@firenet.org); [john.alves@state.co.us](mailto:john.alves@state.co.us); [patt.dorsey@state.co.us](mailto:patt.dorsey@state.co.us); [lyon@lpcattorney.org](mailto:lyon@lpcattorney.org); Sheryl Rogers; [ken.charles@state.co.us](mailto:ken.charles@state.co.us); [jack@durangobusiness.org](mailto:jack@durangobusiness.org); Karola Hanks; [davissq@durangofirerescue.org](mailto:davissq@durangofirerescue.org); [bairdsl@durangofirerescue.org](mailto:bairdsl@durangofirerescue.org); Wall, Dan; Christenson, Dave; Ostrander, David; Griswold, Hays; Stevenson, Peter; Thomi, Wendy; Portillos, Christine; [khieux.joyel@epa.gov](mailto:khieux.joyel@epa.gov); Gwen J.achelt..lanalee Hogan; Joanne Spina; Joe Kerby; [pfoster@wrightwater.com](mailto:pfoster@wrightwater.com); Todd Weaver; Personal Email/Ex. 6 [:@hotmail.com](mailto:@hotmail.com); [jtl@durango.net](mailto:jtl@durango.net); Sarah Jacobson; Sean Smith; Frank Sandoval; [j.white@state.co.us](mailto:j.white@state.co.us); [andrewmiller@centura.org](mailto:andrewmiller@centura.org); [akimple@mountainstudies.org](mailto:akimple@mountainstudies.org); [marcie@mountainstudies.org](mailto:marcie@mountainstudies.org); [kgurule@southernute-nsn.gov](mailto:kgurule@southernute-nsn.gov); [director@sjcph.org](mailto:director@sjcph.org); [laila@sjcph.org](mailto:laila@sjcph.org); [CooperD@sjces.net](mailto:CooperD@sjces.net); [oem@sanjuancountycolorado.us](mailto:oem@sanjuancountycolorado.us); [darlene.marcus@mail.house.gov](mailto:darlene.marcus@mail.house.gov); [rcorkish@gmail.com](mailto:rcorkish@gmail.com); [john\\_whitney@bennet.senate.gov](mailto:john_whitney@bennet.senate.gov); [ellen.roberts.senate@state.co.us](mailto:ellen.roberts.senate@state.co.us); [tojohns@southernute-nsn.gov](mailto:tojohns@southernute-nsn.gov); [swhitema@southernute-nsn.gov](mailto:swhitema@southernute-nsn.gov); [butlerpeter2@gmail.com](mailto:butlerpeter2@gmail.com); [Melissa.Schneider@state.co.us](mailto:Melissa.Schneider@state.co.us); [oem@sanjuancountycolorado.us](mailto:oem@sanjuancountycolorado.us)  
**Subject:** FW: News Release - Update on Local Response to Gold King Mine - Irrigation Ditches to be Flushed

Going out shortly to the media!!!!

**From:** Sarah Jacobson  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 12, 2015 7:14 PM  
**To:** [mark.salley@state.co.us](mailto:mark.salley@state.co.us); [jeannine.natterman@state.co.us](mailto:jeannine.natterman@state.co.us); [meghan.trubee@state.co.us](mailto:meghan.trubee@state.co.us); [wayne.walsh@durangogov.org](mailto:wayne.walsh@durangogov.org); [sherri.dugdale@durangogov.org](mailto:sherri.dugdale@durangogov.org); Joe Lewandowski; [peterson.cynthia@epa.gov](mailto:peterson.cynthia@epa.gov); [acevedo.janie@epa.gov](mailto:acevedo.janie@epa.gov); [harris-bishop.rusty@epa.gov](mailto:harris-bishop.rusty@epa.gov); Sarah Jacobson; Susan Hakanson; [foneil@sjbhd.org](mailto:foneil@sjbhd.org); [cmacpherson@sjbhd.org](mailto:cmacpherson@sjbhd.org); [cninde@sjbhd.org](mailto:cninde@sjbhd.org); [kgerule@southernute-nsn.gov](mailto:kgerule@southernute-nsn.gov); Daniel Bender; [harrison.melissa@epa.gov](mailto:harrison.melissa@epa.gov); [stclair.christie@epa.gov](mailto:stclair.christie@epa.gov); [amber.blake@durangogov.org](mailto:amber.blake@durangogov.org); [smith.paula@epa.gov](mailto:smith.paula@epa.gov); [kmcduffle@sjbhd.org](mailto:kmcduffle@sjbhd.org); [anne.klein@madebyhco.com](mailto:anne.klein@madebyhco.com); [sasmith@southernute-nsn.gov](mailto:sasmith@southernute-nsn.gov); [amgarcia@southernute-nsn.gov](mailto:amgarcia@southernute-nsn.gov)  
**Subject:** FW: News Release - Update on Local Response to Gold King Mine - Irrigation Ditches to be Flushed

Going to the media next! Thanks for all your help!

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**From:** Sarah Jacobson  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 12, 2015 7:11 PepaM  
**To:** Entire County; [cmacpherson@sjbhd.org](mailto:cmacpherson@sjbhd.org); [jeannine.natterman@state.co.us](mailto:jeannine.natterman@state.co.us)  
**Subject:** News Release - Update on Local Response to Gold King Mine - Irrigation Ditches to be Flushed

La Plata County, San Juan Basin Health Department and City of Durango are assisting the EPA by staffing the Call Center and providing GIS mapping of properties that have domestic water wells. There were a total of 54 residential water well samples taken through yesterday and a total of 24 private water wells will be sampled today. Individual well owners will be contacted directly as their results are completed, to be followed by written correspondence with validated results.

EPA technicians took 19 sediment samples yesterday and shipped 11 of those samples for testing yesterday, and 8 were sent overnight to labs today, because they were taken after the shipping deadline. Validated results are expected by Sunday. In addition, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment has collected their own sediment samples and anticipates preliminary results tomorrow. Sheriff Smith, in consultation with all partner agencies stated, "Although we are all in agreement about the water quality results being back to pre-event levels, it is only prudent that we wait to have sediment testing results to ensure public safety prior to opening the river to recreation."

This evening, EPA officials will work with La Plata County Director of Emergency Management Butch Knowlton and ditch operators to inspect and flush out select irrigation ditches as a measured step towards opening irrigation for farmers and ranchers who depend on Animas River water for their crops and livestock. "I expect to see a slight temporary change in color of the Animas River as a result of the ditch flushing," said Knowlton. A plan to open and flush remaining ditches is being developed dependent upon results of this initial flush. Operators of ditches that take water from the Animas River are asked to call the Call Center at 970-385-8700 (open from 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.) and provide their name and phone numbers so officials can coordinate opening of River head gates. Individual water users are asked to keep their gates closed until notified.

Despite the opening of the ditches, owners of livestock are cautioned against allowing livestock watering at this time. Butch Knowlton has requested additional involvement from veterinary science experts from national, state, and local levels to help address concerns that residents have expressed about their livestock. Topics to be addressed are concerns surrounding animals drinking from contaminated irrigation ditches, canals and the river.

“We are pleased that the community and our local, state and federal partners are taking these steps to bring our irrigation back online for our farmers and ranchers,” said Liane Jollon, San Juan Basin Health Director. “Based on the test results to date, the flowing water has returned to pre-incident levels.”

EPA launched a new website for the incident at <http://www2.epa.gov/goldkingmine>. CDPHE also has a webpage for the incident at <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/animas-river-spill>.

Incident information is also posted to the La Plata County website at <http://www.co.laplatco.us/emergency>, San Juan Basin Health Department’s Website at [www.sjbhd.org](http://www.sjbhd.org), on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/LaPlataCounty](http://www.facebook.com/LaPlataCounty) and <http://www.facebook.com/sanjuanbasinhealth>. La Plata County has set up a call center for questions from citizens at 970-385-8700, open from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.